

HARUN FAROCKI

Screenings from April 8–June 10 are on Sundays, 2:00 pm
at Anthology Film Archives, 32 2nd Ave, New York, NY.

- APRIL 8 VIDEOGRAMS OF A REVOLUTION
W/ ANDREI UJICĂ. 1992. 106 MIN.
- APRIL 15 BEDTIME STORIES: SHIPS
1977. 3 MIN.
- AS YOU SEE
1986. 72 MIN.
- APRIL 22 BEDTIME STORIES: BRIDGES
1977. 3 MIN.
- HOW TO LIVE IN THE FRG
1990. 79 MIN.
- APRIL 29 BEDTIME STORIES: RAILWAYS
1977. 3 MIN.
- IMAGES OF THE WORLD AND THE INSCRIPTION OF WAR
1988. 75 MIN.
- MAY 6 BEDTIME STORIES: CATS
1977. 3 MIN.
- AN IMAGE
1983. 25 MIN.
- A NEW PRODUCT
2012. 37 MIN.
- MAY 13 STILL LIFE
1997. 56 MIN.
- MAY 20 I THOUGHT I WAS SEEING CONVICTS
2000. 23 MIN.
- SILVER AND THE CROSS
2010. 17 MIN.
- INTERFACE
1995. 23 MIN.
- MAY 27 IN COMPARISON
2009. 61 MIN.

Harun Farocki was born in 1944 in what was Sudetengau, now the Czech Republic. He lived in India and Indonesia before moving with his family to Germany at age 10. In his early twenties, he left for West Berlin to further his studies in cinema, and spent most of his working life there. By the time of his death in 2014, he had directed over 120 films and installations. Laboring under the burden of Europe's history in which the Holocaust loomed large, Farocki was a naturalist of loss. His work, often graceful in its observations, was never far from the injury of our world. "He was endlessly patient," Antje Ehmman wrote, "with the strangeness, the beauty, the stupidity, and even the unbearable cruelty of our world." He consistently chronicled that which has been intentionally repressed – genocide, the laborer, the American prison system, the trauma of war. Often his films register the effects that free markets, war, and their attendant technologies have on the individual, intimating that these forces are constant company. Coincident with major and incremental shifts in technology, the films in this program serve as an index of technological development from the beginning of the twentieth century to the first decade of the twenty-first.

Organized by Lucas Quigley and Robert Snowden. The project would not be possible without the support of Antje Ehmman, The Estate of Harun Farocki, Nicola Lees, Carol Greene, Jed Rapfogel, and Greene Naftali Gallery. We also wish to thank Jesse Bransford, Tammy Brown, Marina Molarsky–Beck, Leslie Dick, Matthias Rajmann, Chloe Truong–Jones, Andrew Weiner, and Audrey Wollen. Design by Lucas Quigley.

80 Washington Square East is a part of NYU, Steinhardt School,
Department of Art and Art Professions Education Block
80 Washington Square E, New York, NY 10003

PROGRAM

April 8

Videograms of a Revolution

1992, 106 min

Farocki and Andrei Ujică's film shows the Romanian revolution of December 1989 in Bucharest in a new media-based form of historiography. Demonstrators occupied the television station and broadcast continuously for 120 hours, thereby establishing the television studio as a new historical site. Between December 21, 1989 (the day of President Ceaușescu's last speech) and December 26, 1989 (the first televised summary of his trial), the cameras recorded events at the most important locations in Bucharest, almost without exception.

(Dietrich Leder)

April 15

Bedtime Stories: Ships

1977, 3 min.

As You See

1986, 72 min.

As You See is an action-filled feature film. It reflects upon girls in porn magazines to whom names are ascribed and about the nameless dead in mass graves, upon machines that are so ugly that coverings have to be used to protect the workers' eyes, upon engines that are too beautiful to be hidden under the hoods of cars, upon labor techniques that either cling to the notion of the hand and the brain working together or want to do away with it. My film *As You See* is an essay film. The contemporary opinion industry is like a huge mouth, or maybe a paper shredder.

I compose a new text out of these scraps and thus stage a paper-chase. My film is made up of many details and creates a lot of image-image and word-image and word-word relationships among them. So there's a lot to chew on. I searched for and found a form in which one can make a little money go a long way.

(Harun Farocki)

April 22

How to Live in the FRG

1990, 79 min.

In 1989, the production year, we filmed acted scenes in 46 locations. Scenes from psycho-dramas, socio-dramas, and other hypenated-science dramas. We filmed in schools, public administration offices, higher education institutions and clinics, when fragments of life were acted out. When life was acted to demonstrate something, to instruct, to practice, to cope with something. [...] I filmed games, because games have rules and establish rules. There are all too few rules determining the speech and actions of people in documentary films

today. [...] The plasticity of life and work processes decreases everywhere. At the same time, more and more games are played which are intended to expose what lies hidden within human beings. The rules by which we are supposed to live are increasingly uncertain, and there are more and more games where life is trained, like a sport. Instruction manuals for life: in the commodity society, the instruction manual is the only record of theory.

(Harun Farocki)

April 29

Bedtime Stories: Railways

1977, 3 min.

Images of the World and the Inscription of War

1988, 75 min.

The vanishing point of *Images of the World* is the conceptual image of the 'blind spot' of the evaluators of aerial footage of the IG Farben industrial plant taken by the Americans in 1944. Commentaries and notes on the photographs show that it was only decades later that the CIA noticed what the Allies hadn't wanted to see: that the Auschwitz concentration camp is depicted next to the industrial bombing target. At one point during this later investigation, the image of an experimental wave pool – already visible at the beginning of the film – flashes across the screen, recognizably referring to the bidding of the gaze: for one's gaze and thoughts are not free when machines, in league with science and the military, dictate what is to be investigated.

(Christa Blümlinger)

May 6

Bedtime Stories 1–3: Cat Stories

1977, 9 min.

An Image

1983, 25 min.

Four days spent in a studio working on a centerfold photo for *Playboy* magazine provided the subject matter for my film. The magazine itself deals with culture, cars, a certain lifestyle. Maybe all those trappings are only there to cover up the naked woman. Maybe it's like with a paper-doll. The naked woman in the middle is a sun around which a system revolves: of culture, of business, of living! (It's impossible to either look or film into the sun.) One can well imagine that the people creating such a picture, the gravity of which is supposed to hold all that, perform their task with as much care, seriousness, and responsibility as if they were splitting uranium.

(Harun Farocki)

A New Product

2012, 37 min.

A New Product shows that organizations have found ways and means to speak

positively using cynicism; that means, using phrases whose emptiness one not only perceives, but even takes into account. One could speak of a second order cynicism, which entails being cynical about one's own cynicism and gaining a language that communicates that one only trusts it because one doesn't trust it, and knows oneself in this mistrust to be of one mind with all one's counterparts. One could be tempted to extol this as a further case of the social, not entirely conscious refinement of communication, if it were not clear how much it compels the participants into an infantilization, from which they see no escape.

(Dirk Baecker)

May 13

Still Life

1997, 56 min.

According to Farocki, today's photographers working in advertising are, in a way, continuing the tradition of 17th century Flemish painters in that they depict objects from everyday life – the "still life." Farocki illustrates this intriguing hypothesis with three documentary sequences that show the photographers at work creating a contemporary "still life": a cheese-board, beer glasses, and an expensive watch.

(Production note)

May 20

I Thought I Was Seeing Convicts

2000, 23 min.

Images from the maximum-security prison in Corcoran, California. The surveillance camera shows a pie-shaped segment: a concrete-paved yard where the prisoners, dressed in shorts and mostly shirtless, are allowed to spend a half an hour a day. A convict attacks another, upon which those uninvolved lay themselves flat on the ground, their arms over their heads. They know what comes now: the guard will call out a warning and the fire rubber bullets. If the convicts do not stop fighting now, the guard will shoot for real. The pictures are silent, the trail of gun smoke drifts across the picture. The camera and the gun are right next to each other. The field of vision and the gun viewfinder fall together...

(Harun Farocki)

The Silver and the Cross

2010, 17 min.

This video, a diptych of two side-by-side images, analyzes the towns, workers, and silver mines of Potosi, Perú, during the period of Spanish colonization. With a landscape painting by Gaspar Miguel de Berrio, Farocki discusses the brutal process by which Spain colonized the Incan empire by enslaving its people, extracting its resources, and monopolizing its silver industry. As Farocki exclaims, "On the mountain the

cross; in the mountain the silver ore. The Spanish colonists brought the cross and took away the silver.”

Interface
1995, 24 min.

Throughout most of *Interface* Farocki sits at a desk, watching two video monitors while explaining his editing process in a monotonous fashion: how to edit with film, how to edit with video, how to pause and play and loop and repeat. He only faces the camera once and even then does not look directly into the lens. [...] “The image comments on the image,” says Farocki, pointing at each of the television screens. The images on these screens come from film footage, though rather than a series of operational images it is Farocki’s own work. [...] By using his own films to illustrate his approach to editing, Farocki turns his art into an instructional; these images are treated as if they were operational.
(Conor Bateman)

May 27

In Comparison
2009, 61 min.

I wanted to make a film about concomitance and about contemporary production on a range of different technical levels. So I looked for an object that had not changed too much in the past few thousand years. This could have been a shoe or a knife, but a brick becomes part of a building and therefore part of our environment. So the brick appears as something of a poetic object. I follow its mode of creation and use in Africa, India, and Europe. The issue of labor and production is something I’ve often pursued. In recent years I’ve made a number of films about the immaterial work we find in our own postindustrial countries. My work is also quite immaterial.
(Harun Farocki)

June 3

On Construction of Griffith’s Films
2006, 9 min.
We picked a sequence from Griffith’s *Intolerance* (1916). It shows a dialogue between a man and a woman, filmed and edited as shot and counter-shot. We reproduced the shot on two monitors to reveal its narrative character and also because analysis requires us to dissect something. The narrative form of shot / counter-shot, which would later become the norm for depicting dialogue in film, remains novel here. A few years earlier Griffith had still used tracking shots to tell his stories. In *The Lonedale Operator* (1911), cuts were made only when the scene changed; a cut in the movie’s story line. In *Intolerance*, cinematography had already achieved such a level of independence that it was the camera that constituted a room with its detail.
(Harun Farocki)

Parallel I–IV
2012–2014, 43 min.

Parallel opens up a history of styles in computer graphics. The first games of the 1980s consisted of only horizontal and vertical lines. This abstraction was seen as a failing, and today representations are oriented towards photo-realism.

For over one hundred years photography and film were the leading media. From the start, they served not only to inform and entertain, but were also media of scientific research and documentation. That’s also why these reproduction techniques were associated with notions of objectivity and contemporaneity – whereas images created by drawing and painting indicated subjectivity and the transrational.

Apparently today computer animation is taking the lead. Our subject is the development and creation of digital animation. If, for example, a forest has to be covered in foliage, the basic genetic growth program will be applied, so that “trees with fresh foliage”, “a forest in which some trees bear four-week-old foliage, others six-week-old foliage” can be created. The more generative algorithms are used, the more the image detaches itself from the appearance as found and becomes an ideal-typical.

Using the example of trees and bushes, water, fire and clouds we compare the development of surfaces and colourings over the past thirty years in computer animation images. We want to document reality-effects such as reflections, clouds, and smoke in their evolutionary history.
(Harun Farocki)

June 10

Remember Tomorrow Is the First Day of the Rest of Your Life
1972, 10 min.

This ten minute short film is composed of shots of an AFN DJ at work and of a car ride, whereby the camera points out of the car (through the windscreen or the side windows) or it captures and tracks a passing car. [...] The wheels of pop run idle in *Heavy Rotation*, or as Farocki puts it, AFN doesn’t advertise anything and because of that it is a super-commercial station. It promotes the sound and the notion of being commercial. At the same time, the constantly accelerating rotation leads today’s music consumer to experience the present as a memory (these days eighties songs are already being treated as oldies). AFN permanently repeats itself, transforms repetition into enjoyment and (for those who would have it) the present into eternity.
(Gero Günther)

Make Up
1973, 29 min.

The make-up artist Serge Lutens is shown covering a model’s face with powder then working it into her face over several minutes. The face becomes

a canvas, primed for painting. Flesh is turned into something different, looking like marble. It seems as though life has to be frozen in order to achieve beauty; I reused some of this footage 15 years later in *Images of the World and the Inscription of War* which deals with the relationship between preservation and destruction.
(Harun Farocki)

The Taste of Life
1979, 29 min.

For years I’ve been looking for the means to capture everyday life just as it is perceived through a glance from the street. Twenty years ago, you could see young people standing with their bicycles on street corners, in fact, if the bicycles were there, you could be sure to find the young people standing there talking. I would like to document these kinds of events. On this occasion, I was presented with the opportunity to do so. For two and a half weeks, I walked around different parts of the city with my camera and collected images for the film.
(Harun Farocki)

June 17

The Expression of Hands
1997, 30 min.

Historically, the cinema close-up was initially employed to convey emotions through facial expressions. But soon filmmakers also began focusing their attention on hands. Using film extracts, Farocki explores this visual language, its symbolism, Freudian slips, automatism and its music. Often, hands betray an emotion which the face tries to dissimulate. They can also function as a conduit (exchanging money) or witness to a form of competence (work).
(Production note)

Workers Leaving the Factory
1995, 36 min.

Workers Leaving the Factory – such was the title of the first cinema film ever shown in public. For 45 seconds, this still existent sequence depicts workers at the photographic products factory in Lyon owned by the brothers Louis and Auguste Lumière hurrying, closely packed, out of the shadows of the factory gates and into the afternoon sun. Only here, in departing, are the workers visible as a social group. But where are they going? To a meeting? To the barricades? Or simply home?

These questions have preoccupied generations of documentary filmmakers. For the space before the factory gates has always been the scene of social conflicts. And furthermore, this sequence has become an icon of the narrative medium in the history of the cinema.

In his documentary essay of the same title, Harun Farocki explores this scene right through the history of film. [...] His film shows that the Lumière brothers’

sequence already carries within itself the germ of a foreseeable social development: the eventual disappearance of this form of industrial labor. (Klaus Gronenborn)

June 24

Prison Images
2000, 60 min.

A film composed of images from prisons. Quotes from fiction films and documentaries as well as footage from surveillance cameras. A look at the new control technologies, at personal identification devices, electronic ankle bracelets, electronic tracking devices.

The cinema has always been attracted to prisons. Today's prisons are full of video surveillance cameras. These images are unedited and monotonous; as neither time nor space is compressed, they are particularly well-suited to conveying the state of inactivity into which prisoners are placed as a punitive measure. The surveillance cameras show the norm and reckon with deviations from it. Clips from films by Genet and Bresson. Here the prison appears as a site of sexual infraction, a site where human beings must create themselves as people and as workers.

(Harun Farocki)

July 1

War at a Distance
2003, 58 min.

In 1991, when images of the Gulf War flooded the international media, it was virtually impossible to distinguish between real pictures and those generated on computer. This loss of bearings was to change forever our way of deciphering what we see.

The image is no longer used only as testimony, but also as an indispensable link in a process of production and destruction. This is the central premise of *War at a Distance*, which continues the deconstruction of claims to visual objectivity Harun Farocki developed in his earlier work.

With the help of archival and original material, Farocki sets out in effect to define the relationship between military strategy and industrial production and sheds light on how the technology of war finds applications in everyday life.

(Antje Ehmann)

July 8, 2 pm

Serious Games I–IV
2009–10, 44 min.

Serious Games I: Watson is Down

In the autumn of 2009 we filmed a drill at the Marine Corps Base 29 Palms in California. Four Marines sitting in a class represented the crew of a tank. They had laptops in front of them on which they steered their own vehicle and watched others in the unit being driven through a

Computer-Animation Landscape. The simulated Afghan is based on geographical data out of Afghanistan. A street in the computer landscape runs exactly as it would in the real Afghanistan; the same holds for every tree, the vegetation on the ground or the mountain ranges. The instructor places explosive devices and sets insurgents out in the area. A sniper shot the tank gunner, which we documented with the camera. When the tank drives over the fallow it kicks up a dust tail. The more vegetation there is, the less dust. On the asphalt street, no dust. Even with all this attention to detail, death in the computer game is still something different than the real one.

(Harun Farocki)

Serious Games II: Three Dead

Again, in 29 Palms, we embarked on an exercise with around 300 extras who represented both the Afghan and Iraqi population. A few dozen Marines were on guard and went out on patrol. The town where the maneuver was carried out was on a slight rising in the desert and its buildings were made from containers. It looked as though we had modeled reality on a computer animation.

(Harun Farocki)

Serious Games III: Immersion

For the video installation *Immersion* Farocki visited a workshop organized by the Institute for Creative Technologies, a research center for virtual reality and computer-simulations. One of their projects concerns the development of a therapy for war-veterans suffering from Post-traumatic Stress Disorder. Farocki is interested in the use of virtual realities and games in the recruiting, training and now also therapy for soldiers. Farocki explores the connection between virtual reality and the military – how the fictional scenarios of computer games are used both in the training of U.S. troops prior to their deployment in combat zones, and in psychological care for troops suffering battlefield trauma upon their return.

(Production note)

Serious Games IV: A Sun without Shadow

This chapter considers the fact that the pictures with which preparations were made for war are so very similar to the pictures with which war was evaluated afterward. But there is a difference: The program for commemorating traumatic experiences is somewhat cheaper. Nothing and no-one casts a shadow here.

(Harun Farocki)

July 15, 2 pm

Nothing Ventured
2004, 50 min.

What venture capital or VC for short actually means is explained in the film itself. Banks only lend money against collateral. Those who have none have to

turn to VC companies and pay interest of 40%. At least.

We had filmed scenes at a wide range of companies: VC companies discussing projects; entrepreneurs seeking to give shape to their ideas; consultants rehearsing their presentation. In the end we restricted ourselves to just one set of negotiations and used the material shot over two days. What tipped the balance for me was hearing the lawyer for NCTE, the company seeking capital say, "We are a little disappointed by the offer". I felt myself transported into a Coen Brothers film. The protagonists in our story film are sharp-witted and filled with a desire to present themselves.

They are negotiating the conditions for the loan of 750,000 Euros. After initially failing to reach an agreement, they sidestep to a general discussion about strategic issues. It emerges that NCTE, a manufacturer of contactless torque sensors, is already in negotiations with a number of large companies. And this ignites imagination, the world is full of possibilities and weighing them up becomes a joy.

(Harun Farocki)

WRITTEN TRAILERS

Harun Farocki

1944

I should have been born in Berlin, in the Virchow Hospital, but we left the city because of the bombing. I was born in Neutitschein, today Nový Jičín, at that time Sudetengau, today the Czech Republic. We stayed there for only a few weeks; we spent less time there than I have ever needed since then in order to explain that I'm neither a Czech nor a Sudeten German. I have also spent lots of time with the spelling of my name, Harun El Usman Faruqi, until I simplified its spelling in 1969.

1945–1953

My father was Indian. He first trained as a pilot in Dessau; later he completed his first period of study with a Ph.D on *The Hindu-Mohamedan Conflict from an Economic Point of View in Gießen*, and then studied medicine in Berlin. My mother was German and grew up in Berlin. After her training as a foreign language correspondent, she worked for a scientific society and then studied medicine for a few semesters. In 1947 we moved to India, where my father intended to settle down as a doctor. The civil war took us to different places. In 1949 we moved to Indonesia where my sister Suraiya and I went to school. First in Sukabumi, later in Jakarta; the school language was Dutch.

1953–1958

We moved back to Germany and lived in Bad Godesberg, a little town near Bonn in which only five houses had been bombed, where I attended a Jesuit School which was full of the sons of the economic and political elite. I saw my first Westerns and gangster films in the Burglichtspiele cinema. Other cultural experiences: 1958 in Cologne, the big Picasso exhibition; in Bonn at a school theatre, Thornton Wilder's *Our Town*.

1958–1962

My father set up a doctor's surgery in Hamburg. We moved into a terraced house and had a Mercedes. I saw the world premiere of Brecht's *Saint Joan of the Stockyards*. Things didn't go well at school. I went to a disreputable bar every day, and this helped me to rebel against my father. I ran away from home several times and wanted to be a writer.

1962–1966

I ran away once and for all, moved to West Berlin and, following the beatniks' example, I scraped a living with casual jobs and lived in various cheap flats. I also went to evening classes and finally took my A'levels. Occasionally I succeeded in getting a proposed review accepted for radio or a newspaper, less occasionally, a short literary text.

1966

This year I made my first film of three minutes duration for a Berlin television channel. (*Zwei Wege/Two Paths*). Ursula Lefkes and I got married. I was admitted to the just-opened Berlin Film Academy, the DFFB. I also got my driving licence.

1967

I was thrown out of film school with five other students after an intermediate examination. This led to a big protest by the rest of the students. In the following summer the protest movement swelled enormously and in autumn we were readmitted for a trial year. That summer I travelled through Venezuela and Colombia for several months in order to have a look at the revolution and the guerrilla movement, but I didn't find them.

1968

For once in my life I was ahead of Godard: at the beginning of the year we disrupted a festival of experimental film in Knokke, Belgium, fortunately not the films by Shirley Clarke and Michael Snow. In May my daughters Annabel Lee and Larissa Lu were born. I was thrown out of film academy again, this time with around 15 other students, because of political activity.

1969

My father Abdul Qudus Faruqi, born 9 March 1901, died on 21 January 1969.

I made a short film with a budget of some DM15,000. (*Nicht Löschbares Feuer/Inextinguishable Fire*, 1969). The producer at WDR, Reinhold W. Thiel, thought that the actors' way of speaking and acting was not stylised enough, or stylised in the wrong way and proposed that all the actors should be dubbed by two voices. Night after night I edited the working prints into synchronised loops, which turned out to be far too long, as I realised when I did the sound recording in a youth film studio where I could work for free. When the film had its premiere in Mannheim and I saw it for the first time on screen, I realised you could see my cameraman's girlfriend with her blonde curly hair who was taking a joyride in the aeroplane we hired to fly over Munich that stood in for a cropduster on a mission to drop pesticides over Vietnam. Critics blamed me for technical sloppiness and overcalculation. In those days things were changing quickly and a few months later the film was not regarded as awkward or cold any more; it actually gained a certain recognition, also beyond the anti-Vietnam War movement.

1970

Hartmut Bitomsky and I planned to film *Das Kapital* by Karl Marx; the first part, *Die Teilung aller Tage (The Division of all Days)*, was completed in this year. We read Marx and Marx commentaries and texts on

semiotics, cybernetics, didactics and learning machines. Our programme: "to make film scientifically and make science politically."

1971–1977

During the production of the second part of *Das Kapital – Eine Sache, die sich versteht (15x)* (Something Self Explanatory (15 x), 1971) – we overreached ourselves completely. Before our daily shoot, with very little money and a small team, we had to accomplish Herculean tasks; for example collecting a donkey with a mini van and pushing it up three steps, which was much easier than motivating it to climb down again. Once Hartmut had to push a dolly with one hand and hold a prop into the image with the other, while performing a voice over. Another time we had to push a car up a steep ramp, and do so this very quickly because we were filming secretly in the Academy, where we were banned.

Out of stupidity or courage we sometimes gave an entire scene of some minutes to an extra from the job centre. When the film was finished the comrades who belonged to political parties were bound to dislike it for the simple reason that their own party hadn't commissioned it; the so-called undogmatic factions found it not undogmatic enough: if anybody can be a revolutionary, then anybody can be a filmmaker. We had tried to protect ourselves from this kind of criticism with our scientific pretension. We had also speculated that with our work we could reach film people who were after innovation and that this would offer us a niche in the cultural industry. This calculation didn't add up. For the next few years we could almost only get casual jobs to make a living. To me it looked as if we were being punished. We had tried to exploit the guilty conscience of those who had called for 'revolutionary film' or had nodded in agreement, but they now didn't want to be reminded of their guilty conscience or their nodding.

It wasn't easy to do anything political in television, firstly because I didn't want to understand politics as simply content or discourse. I was looking for an advanced political practice as promoted by the Groupe Dziga Vertov or Tel Quel. For example I was against intercuts or shot-countershots.

For a while I tried an alliance with the proletariat in the TV industry, with the female editors and cameramen (in those days the former were exclusively female and the others male). I talked to editors and published our conversations in the journal *Filmkritik*. We discussed worker participation and how it should affect the quality of production. If such participation had been seriously attempted or actually achieved, it would certainly not have improved my production possibilities.

In the early 1970s the WDR television channel instigated a series called Glashaus, which included TV criticism. I contributed the feature *Der Ärger mit den Bildern*. Eine Telekritik von Harun Farocki (*The Trouble with Images. A Critique of Television*, 1973) in which I examined the word-image relations in daily broadcasts. It wasn't difficult to demonstrate that television images didn't show what the commentary inferred from them.

That language is the key medium and that images are only nominally supposed to depict what the commentary addresses. My critique triggered agitated debates in the television industry. At that time, public-sector television had no competition and a yearly growth rate that was almost equal to that of the overall economy. It employed a host of functionaries who dealt with the requirements of the political parties, the church and other lobbyists. They also fielded the demands of the new political left, which was calling for new and different treatments of issues. But it was unable to deal with a critique of television's overall daily practice. And many people who were covering new issues (women's liberation, reform of the education system) found my criticism unhelpful.

1977–1979

For many years I tried unsuccessfully to find the means for a film which would show that it was the contradiction between the productive forces and the relations of production that drove German industry into crisis and to Hitler. As Alfred Sohn-Rethel pointed out, they put Hitler into the saddle while they themselves were the horse. In autumn 1977 I started shooting with around DM30,000, which I had earned from other productions. Everyone in front of the camera received DM100 per day, everyone behind the camera DM50. Sometimes we worked in comparatively luxurious circumstances: while the lighting was being prepared I rehearsed with the actors in Ursula's flat, where the wardrobe was also located. But in the evenings I had to schlep heavy objects, convince an actress about our project – for four or five evenings, in the end successfully.

Shortly after completing the shoot, the body of the murdered Hans-Martin Schleyer was found. I had a gun in my flat which we had used as a prop, and in those days the police always came to a few hundred suspicious flats after a sensational event – they had also called on me a few times. In panic I got rid of the gun – but the police didn't come. After 10 years they finally knew who was using guns for artistic purposes.

After the filming was done I first had to do the work for which I had already been paid; and I hadn't kept in mind that you also spend money while you're earning it.

Zwischen Zwei Kriegen (Between Two Wars) was completed in the summer of 1978, and working off its production costs lasted until late 1979. But by then I had learned how to earn money. Meaning that I learnt how to make use of the big television apparatus. Later on I read that the 1970s were the Golden Age of West Germany, and I only learned at the end of the decade how to skim off some of the profits. I probably only had the courage to make productions which didn't fit into any programme because I was surrounded by such wealth and energy. From 1979 until 2000 I was able to make one production every year with television finance, sometimes two or three.

1980–1982

For *Etwas wird Sichtbar/Before your Eyes Vietnam* (1982) I received around DM300,000 from ZDF. Two weeks before the shoot in 1980 I realised what I hadn't admitted to myself for a long time: that I had sided with the Vietcong without dealing with the politics of the victorious communist regime and without mentioning the boat people or the detention camps. I canceled, and wrote a new script. A year later we began to shoot. We filmed on 35mm and had 50 days on location.

1983

We had a few days shooting in a studio belonging to the magazine *Playboy* in Munich, documenting how the centrefold with the nude girl was produced. (*Ein Bild/An Image*, 1983) Some 10 years before I had watched a make-up artist painting a bad injury onto an actor's body. She rolled some synthetic material into a small strand thinner than a tooth pick, glued it on in tiny curved portions, and this looked as if the skin had been broken open by a blow from a blunt item and as if the injured parts had swollen up – even before she painted on the blood. I thought it would be more appropriate to show how a wound is painted than to show a fight that results in a wound.

For a long time I had planned to relate the alienation effect not only to Brecht but also to pop art. I had the idea of documenting cultural-industrial production processes both at a distance and right down to the last detail with my camera. I came back to this again and again. The first of this series is *Make-Up* (1973). It shows in detail how a make-up artist paints a model's face. Using a technique that was often practised in the silent-film era, he covers a woman's face with masses of powder, which he then rubs deeply into the skin. Through the addition of black or red tones he produces a strong effect of plasticity. He transforms flesh into marble, he fossilises female beauty – later on I used parts of this production in *Bilder der Welt und Inschrift des Krieges* (Images of the World and the Inscription of War, 1988). Unfortunately I also staged a few things in *Make-Up*. The next title in this series

was *Single. Eine Schallplatte wird produziert* (Single. A Record is Being Produced, 1979), and then later on also *Stilleben* (Still Life, 1997). In almost all of these cases we were keen to profit from the glamour of the studios in which we were filming, in many cases from their expensive lighting.

1984

I received DM80,000 from the Hamburg film subsidy for a film about *Socially Useful Products*. In the workers' movement criticism of products was mostly postponed until after the revolution. But in the 19th century there had already been a counter-movement, often anarchically inspired, which insisted that workers should fight not only for their salary and proper working conditions but also for producing something useful. I read a lot of books, brochures and pamphlets about the so-called conversion movement, which wanted to turn the armaments industry – which had become obsolete before the end of the Cold War – into something new. I also read Hannah Arendt's *Vita Activa* and other works of hers.

During my research it became clear that it wouldn't be possible to work in the mode of an observational documentary film. Instead I had a kind of draft film or project film in mind, like Pasolini's *Appunti per una Orestiade Africana* (Notes Towards an African Oresteia, 1969). Over many years I had collected material (for my last two films *Between Two Wars* and *Before your Eyes Vietnam*), which then went into a script with a kind of plot and characters who kind of carried the plot. This seemed an unnecessary detour to me now. I found a way in which I could make texts become an issue without the detour of an action. *Wie man sieht* (As You See, 1986) is also the only film of mine that is not sober, but has a somewhat drunken feel. Over the years I had cultivated a way of talking and drinking amongst friends in which you produce nonsense in a productive way. I practised this almost as an art, but in my work I was always seriously austere.

In 1984 the last issue of *Filmkritik* appeared, a magazine to which I contributed as an author and editor for more than 10 years. During its final years we had succeeded in organising a few television productions in order to earn money for the increased printing costs. Once we realised that we would have a yearly deficit of DM20,000, we had to quit.

1985

I had dismissed decorating a political issue with a kind of story, but I still wanted to do a proper story film. 10 years before, I had read a short newspaper item about a man who in the heat of the moment had killed his wife and was now living with the sister of the dead woman. She pretended to be her dead sister, and there were also two children around. I worked on this theme again and again

over the years, and now the production money came together, almost a million DM. It was only while casting that I realised I couldn't conceive of the actress I was looking for as a real person. And when the film was finished I realised that this newspaper item had only interested me because it didn't go into how the living woman was a substitute for the desired dead one.

I had to take more criticism and scorn for this film than for any other one, especially at its premiere in Hof. It felt as if the West German film business was taking revenge for all the impudence that my friends and I had produced over more than a decade in *Filmkritik*. We didn't think much of Fassbinder, Herzog and Reitz, and only approved of the early Wenders.

Today I don't want to see or show *Betrogen* (Betrayed, 1985). Some of it is really silly. The film pretends that it has been shot in 1958, under the restrictions of the studio system. In those days I thought that in some minor works of film history – in plot and acting, quite unspectacular – there would be something that was essentially cinematographic, and that this could become a starting point for completely different works. This was why Godard appreciated Hollywood and even John Ford appealed to Straub. I probably never got rid of this belief entirely. Aiming for this core idea is very presumptuous and needs a different kind of practical experience.

Before I made *Betrayed*, the film *As You See* hadn't been finished entirely. It came out in spring 1986. The film was rejected by the Berlin Film Festival's Forum and the Parisian Festival Cinéma du réel only showed it in a side series. It was shown at the Duisburger Filmwoche and later I was able to sell it to television. Because I worked for two years on these two films – for *Betrayed* I had to defer my fee – I didn't have time to earn any money, so I was initially very much in debt.

1987

During the late 60s I had heard about a training film that showed managers how to cope with their employees. For example, they were supposed to demonstrate how to screw someone up and how to praise somebody else. I couldn't find this film and asked myself if it had existed at all. I now proposed to a TV producer the idea of making a film about management seminars. It was unbelievably difficult to find such seminars. I started to doubt whether they even existed, but then I found a coach who wanted to be filmed at all costs and forced his students to agree to participate by telling them that if they weren't prepared to be filmed, their managerial skills couldn't be up to much.

We installed our video equipment, several cameras and microphones in a hotel in Bad Harzburg. I became anxious when the meeting room began to look more and more like a TV studio, so I had

some floodlights coloured with pink, blue, green, purple and yellow foils.

In those days there were only three television channels in West Germany, and when the film was broadcast on a Thursday at 8.15 pm the other channels were only showing church issues and political debates, with the result that *Die Schulung* (Indoctrination, 1986) reached almost a third of the television audience. I also got a lot of letters, mainly from outraged PR agencies and consultants, asking what they were supposed to think about what they had seen – the film had no commentary. It was a surprise to me that I could gain more attention with a film that had been shot in only five days and edited in about four weeks than with other more labour-intensive productions. This film was also a great help with getting better funding from television. But what is more important was that these multiple production opportunities allowed me not to be restricted to only one approach and type of film, like so many other marginal filmmakers are, or have to be. I made shorter and longer films one after another or at the same time – direct cinema as well as films with an image-text construction.

I made an application to the North Rhine-Westphalian Film Fund with a paper in which I questioned the current status of film and photography, quoting a lot of Vilém Flusser, whose work, which had just been published in Germany, I admired a lot. I got the money and also further funding from WDR for this project, a 45-minute-long film. I was now in the very rare situation of having funds for a project whose specific mode had not yet been settled. I also had a lot of freedom in the choice of subject matter. By chance I read a text by Günter Anders in which he called on people to blockade access to nuclear weapons of mass destruction. When it became known in Britain and the US during the Second World War that the Germans were murdering millions of people, there was a demand to destroy the railway lines that lead to the camps. According to Anders this didn't happen but should have happened; and if we were serious about protesting against the impending destruction of the world, today we would have to blockade access to the missile silos.

During my research I found out that in 1944 American bombers had taken aerial photographs, which also showed Auschwitz, while they were attacking factories in Poland from Italy. In these images you could see a train entering the grounds, a group of inmates queuing up in front of the registry and another group on its way to the gas chambers. The photographs were only discovered in 1977. Two CIA employees, who had seen the television series *Holocaust*, found them during off-duty research. That images from the camps had been taken unknowingly and that they could only be

read after decades – that is a strong metaphor. So strong that for a long time it was very hard for me to find space for other things. The phrase 'helpless anti-fascist' still applied to me. In order to avoid being a 'helpless anti-fascist' you have to contextualise fascism properly. You can only prevent fascism occurring in the future, or at least know how to fight it, if you are acquainted with its roots. In *Between Two Wars* I had depicted the crisis in heavy industry around 1930. The crisis came into existence due to technical innovation – the development of the productive forces as Marx puts it – that undermined production relations. Company owners had to look beyond the limits of their own property but were not able to do so. They welcomed fascism in order to institute a command economy, in which they wouldn't lose their investments. And because they expected Hitler to expand the market with armed force. My film doesn't deal with the Jews and what was done to them. The only person I show as a victim of the Nazi terror is a worker who has gained insight into historical processes.

The left was often unable to speak about the Jews when they tried to prove something – the same with me. My starting point now was the impending mass destruction through nuclear weapons. Hardly anyone responded to this attempt to relate Auschwitz to the current armaments situation. I worked on both versions (*Bilderkrieg/Images-War*, 1987; *Images of the World and the Inscription of War*, 1988) for about two years, mostly at the editing table. My working day was very long – and around 11 pm I usually went for an endurance run. Often a word or a montage idea would come into my mind – though I didn't know what I was looking for. It often happened that I couldn't find what I needed and I first had to put all my books into alphabetical order before I could go back to the editing table.

1989

I begrudged Michael Klier his idea of making a film entirely out of surveillance camera imagery. (*Der Riese/The Giant*, 1983). My idea was to depict life in West Germany through role play – from birth to death. This idea can be communicated in one sentence; so first I didn't want to write it down and preferred to talk about it with the commissioning editors at ZDF Kleines Fernsehspiel. It had to be uttered like a magic spell. But then I did have to write it down – and got funds from ZDF and arte. We were producing for about nine months. Michael Trabitzsch found an institution – let's say, a group which was holding a breastfeeding course. I went along to have a look. Then I had to convince the group to give me permission to film them. Sometimes there was a single person who didn't want to be filmed. Sometimes the group agreed, but when it came to shooting

there was suddenly someone who hadn't attended the meeting before and didn't want to be filmed – so the shoot had to be cancelled. Or meanwhile most of the women had already given birth and the course didn't exist any more. There was a huge vacant hospital in Berlin-Wilmersdorf which had been given to self-help groups by the senate – groups for women whose husbands were foreigners, groups for anorexic or bulimic people, groups for relatives of addicts. The pleasure of organising a political group had obviously been taken over by the necessity of learning or managing something. After around 10 months we had found what we were looking for – and even more: a car one could turn around like a suckling pig on a spit, in order to practice how to get out of a car that had overturned. Or a military exercise by the Federal Armed Forces, where the trainer tells his soldiers to be more excited when reporting a tank approaching: "NATO has been expecting this moment for 30 years now."

During the making of this film the Wall came down. With the end of East Germany the welfare state of West Germany – as marked in the film – also came to an end. When I later presented the film in the US people knew what the film was about. But this didn't seem to be the case in Portugal, France or Spain. I thought perhaps that in Catholic countries people learn enough from their families and don't need to have a training course for everything.

1990

My mother Lili Faroqhi, née Draugelattis, born 9 March 1910, died 31 July 1990.

1991–1992

I saw images of the shootings in Rumania and heard about 60,000 dead bodies. I also watched a report about the cemetery for the poor in Timisoara, where mutilated corpses had been found – torture victims of the Securitate it was said. Later this turned out to be wrong; the bodies had been autopsied in a hospital nearby. Baudrillard therefore came to the conclusion that there had been no revolution in Rumania, or at the most, a fake television revolution. In 1990 I read a book about the fall of Ceaușescu, edited by Hubertus von Amelnxen and Andrei Ujică. I had the idea for a film in which a handful of people who understand something about politics and images would analyze in detail a series of images from those December days in 1989. To make a film like a seminar. I visited the book's two editors. Andrei Ujică suggested that we make the film together, and in summer 1991 we went to Bucharest. Despite many socialist buildings (school centres, factories, housing estates) the journey through Hungary was often like a tour into pre-war times. But in the countryside in Rumania we felt as if we were back in the 19th century. Two horses were pulling a

haywain, the carter was asleep. In Bucharest we were able to use a room in the Ministry of Culture as an office. We got an office in the building of the art administration in which piles of oil paintings of the Ceaucescu's were stored. We began researching images that had been made in the days of the revolution. It was not difficult to gain an overview of the given material. First of all, nearly everybody who had been filming in those days knew each other: staff of the Centre for Documentary Film, television people, students. A year before, television producers from Britain, the US and France had catalogued the material. Private people and student organisations had set up small collections.

But it was difficult to get hold of the best-quality material. Television had many hours of material, broadcast by Studio 4 during the revolution, which hadn't been taped by themselves. In some cases they had copies viewers had made with VHS recorders – aware of the specialness of the historical moment. When we were working in the television building at night, soldiers would hang around with their submachine guns, as if the old regime were still a threat. After we had again and again seen images showing tens or even hundreds of thousands of people coming together in order to achieve the overthrow of the old regime it seemed absurd to call this a television revolution. We dismissed our initial idea of a filmed analysis and decided to reconstruct the five days of a revolution, from 21 to 25 December 1989, from various sources of material, as comprehensively as possible. We started the offline editing with UMatic low-band equipment in my flat in Berlin in summer 1991. Andrei Ujica was based in Heidelberg and joined me each time for a week. It wasn't easy to figure out the day and the time the scenes had been filmed – it was important to us that each shot of our montage would appear in strict chronological order. In order to find more material we were again in Bucharest in autumn 1991. The research took five weeks in total. The outline of the film and the offline-montage took around nine months, the postproduction three months. Nobody had expected such a quick and non-violent collapse of the Soviet Union and the Eastern bloc. I would never have thought that a film about a revolution would simply fall into my lap. All the more a film about a revolution that would not establish, but abolish socialism.

Twice during the editing I was invited by the Goethe Institut to present and discuss my films in the local institutes, film clubs, film archives and universities in the US and Canada. Since then the Goethe Institut has invited me to travel to more than 15 countries. For me these various encounters and experiences have been a compensation for the fact

that since 1992 hardly any cinema in Germany has shown my films. *Leben BRD* (How to Live in the FRG) did go on release in around 30 cinemas in 1990, when Germany was almost reunited. But when *Videogramme einer Revolution* (Videograms of a Revolution, 1992) had its premiere in two cinemas in Berlin in 1993 there were only two people in the audience – in both cinemas.

1993

Before we started the production of *Videograms of a Revolution* I had already received the commission for a film to be compiled entirely from commercial clips. I wanted to make something like an iconographic study, for example to show how a piece of soap comes into contact with the body. It became apparent that although there were many such shots, they were too different to edit them simply one after another. In a commercial for the soap Cleopatra, for example, we see a Queen Cleopatra, followed by a huge entourage, entering a bath of white liquid that is perhaps supposed to be ass's milk, accompanied by a brass band playing music by Verdi. She places a piece of Cleopatra soap in a little wooden ship, puts it in the water and gives it a push. The bath perhaps alludes to the one in which Cleopatra had asked Caesar to make her Queen of Egypt; the ship of the Egyptian fleet she secretly mobilised against the Romans. So the clip also says: the use of this soap transforms a woman into Cleopatra. Verdi – Shakespeare – George Bernard Shaw – Elizabeth Taylor. You can't undo such a continuum with cuts. So I tried to do it with movement cuts: Cleopatra puts the little ship into the water and gives it a push – from this impulse a sledge with vodka whooshes across the polar ice. I had to reduce myself to transitions and give the clips an order. I wanted to tell the story of one day, from early morning to night, as Vertov or Ruttmann had done, but here with material from four decades. It often turned out that the material we were given for the offline montage was totally different from what we got for the on-line postproduction; there were many versions of one clip and not every version was still available. A cut from the Cleopatra ship to the vodka sledge was not possible any more because either the one or the other shot was missing.

The producer of this TV production was Ebbo Demant. He had established something special at SWR Baden-Baden: a time slot for documentary films in public-sector broadcasting. And he had built up a pool of regular contributors. He tried to give a group of about 40 to 50 people the repeated possibility of producing something for television. He organised a meeting every other year where films were viewed and discussed. He was also the one who made it possible for Peter Nestler to produce something for television after some 20

years. I only liked a few of the works of these regulars, although I did like more films than I had expected.

1994–1995

I thought about a kind of remake of *Retraining*; I wanted to show how managers from the East were being connected to the West. It turned out that the same man who had been the protagonist in *Retraining* seven years ago was now going to train the employees of two construction companies from Saxony that had been bought up by a company from Stuttgart, in a mountain hotel in Switzerland. The first days were completely useless. The seminar was held in an Alpine wood-paneled room which was far too small for the more than 40 men and women taking part. And they were not very talkative. If a man or a woman did answer a question from the seminar facilitator – then it was quite short. Before one of the two camera-men found the person speaking, who was often also half hidden, and before the soundman had placed the boom – the comment was already over. Only within the last two days a useful situation came up; they were performing role-plays in which the building employees had to play the commissioner or the representative of the construction firm. The seminar facilitator often gave harsh criticism that was mostly received with shame and only seldom contradicted. Most of the participants had a background as workers or craftspeople and they obviously found it dishonourable to speak like management. But they didn't express this and the facilitator certainly didn't understand what was going on with them.

When I made a 45-minute-long film from this material I never even had to make a painful choice between two scenes. On the contrary I had to take every scene that was merely suitable. I felt like someone who couldn't do anything but repeat his old ideas, and the repetition is even worse than the original.

In the same year I talked to Werner Dütsch from WDR about a film I wanted to make for the 100th anniversary of cinema. A film that would deal with the first motif of the first film that was ever publicly presented: *La Sortie de l'usine Lumière à Lyon* (*Workers Leaving the Factory*, 1895). I watched feature films, documentary films, industrial films and also corporate videos. You can see thousands of workers leaving the Ford factory in Detroit in a documentary from the 1920s. In Fritz Lang's *Metropolis* (1926) the worker-slaves wear uniforms, they trudge along in synchronised movements with bowed heads.

In Lang's *Clash by Night* (1952) Marilyn Monroe leaves a fish factory. This makes you think about fairytales in which princesses suffer – they suffer a

tremendous misery, compared to which ours seems pathetic, although her suffering probably ennobles us if we feel for her.

Over many years, even decades, I had avoided dealing explicitly with the content of films. When I was around 20-years old I read closely or repeatedly many critics influenced by Kracauer, whose method of interpretation I had adopted. The film A shows a person B who acts in a C way. Accordingly the film expresses that the B-person always acts like C, but actually this is bad, because there are also B-persons who act in a D way. Or better, who should act in a D way. But when I came to the Film Academy and the protest movement arose, when there were thousands or even hundreds of thousands of people who thought they knew how a film should depict the world – I looked for another field of activity. I refined Kracauer's method in as much as I said: film A shows how B acts in a C way, but doesn't know that it tells it exactly as if B would act like D. As if the story of a female worker were told like that of a princess. In order to avoid the call for films having to give an example, I then tried to completely ignore the plot. That went so far that I sometimes only paid attention to the space between the protagonists and not at all to what they were saying or doing – which is mostly also saying. But then I realised I had to give up this stance of strict denial. It only now became clear that I had stuck to it longer than to communism or revolution.

1994 was a bad year for us. Ursula became seriously ill and had to have an operation. It was hard for me to work under these circumstances. I watched every scene that might be useful for the *Workers Leaving the Factory* project several times – more often than I usually would have done, because I couldn't see how they were relevant. According to which criteria should I arrange the scenes, and what should the order reveal? During a montage process there usually always comes the moment in which I recognise the basic principle of a project, and this is the key to every necessary decision. But during this project this moment never occurred, so obviously I looked for it afterwards. First I wrote a few newspaper articles about *Workers Leaving the Factory*. I presented the film several times together with additional material, which I hadn't or had only partly used, and commented on it. I gave one of these presentations in Cologne and it was transcribed and published. A year later *Workers Leaving the Factory* became the starting point for an entire conference, about which an entire book was made.

1996

Ursula Lefkes, born 14 October 1935, died 31 July 1996.

1997–1999

In the early 1990s Kaja Silverman and I had had a conversation about Godard's *Passion* (1982), which was published in the magazine *Discourse*. We now planned to write a book about eight Godard films. First we watched each film we had agreed on in the cinema. In the case of *Le gai savoir* (1969) we rented a 16mm reduction print from a distributor in New York that delivered prints to colleges. The print was almost 30 years old and apart from red, every colour was almost completely bleached out. Kaja had a so-called 'analytical projector' in Berkeley with which you could control the projection speed and jog backwards and forwards like you do at an editing table. We organised VHS tapes from France, Germany and the US. We always began with a conversation, which we taped. Kaja then did a transcription, made a text out of it and marked the passages I should work on. First I wrote in German and then I roughly translated it. Kaja revised it and I corrected it – again in German – and so on and so forth. Kaja had the major part in our production, not only because the book was produced in English, but because Kaja was more experienced in writing. The book was first published in the US. We also found a publisher in Germany and Roger M. Buerghel did the translation. I worked with him on the German version in Berlin, in Vienna and in California and also rewrote some passages. Kaja and I did book presentations on both continents. We each read our parts, either in German or in English – although not everything attributed to me was always written by me. Kaja had sometimes arranged her argumentation as a dialogue between us. The cinemathèque in Toronto had screened all eight Godard films before we gave our public reading. We gave a presentation with video-beamed excerpts from *Nouvelle Vague* (1989) at the Berliner Ensemble's rehearsal stage. The invitation to this theatre reminded me that I had seen Brecht productions here some decades before. In those days I would have never dared to dream of an appearance at the Berliner Ensemble myself. The auditorium was packed, but to my disappointment we only sold seven signed books. Our publisher Rainald Gussmann said that this was not such a bad result.

Sometimes friends complained that for five years now, since *Videograms of a Revolution*, I hadn't made a longer film. Neither a feature-length film nor one that could be compared to a book, but merely short films like newspaper articles. Christian Petzold thought that my writing and teaching was responsible for this – between 1992 and 1999 I taught every other semester in Berkeley, mostly together with Kaja Silverman. My reply of course was that major works only counted from a career-driven point of view; that it would be entirely

anti-modern to accuse an artist of only making drawings and no large oil paintings any more. In fact there are only a few filmmakers who make a short film for television, cinema or other forms of distribution after having made a feature-length film. And if they do so it is seen as something of a comedown. I now realised that I preferred the small format because I had nothing big to say. The thing I wanted to contribute to, the social revolution, had been forcibly cancelled after all. 1989 was the counter-year of 1917.

Of course it was still conceivable to make a feature-length film, a film that would have nothing to do with 1917. *How to Live in the FRG* already had hardly anything to do with 1917. But that there were only two people at the premiere of *Videograms of a Revolution* had shown me that cinema didn't even have a symbolic presence any more.

In 1995 Regis Durand invited me to contribute something to an exhibition in Villeneuve d'Asq (Lille), asking me to make a video commenting on my own work. I wanted to work with two sound-image channels. I had been waiting for this opportunity since seeing Godard's *Numéro Deux* (1975). It was the first time in a long while that I had had to write a script again; we filmed it in two days in my flat. A script was necessary because in those days I didn't edit with a computer programme but with S-VHS equipment, and you couldn't have an offline montage of two parallel channels. I guess I was anxious that the production of a two-channel video wasn't artistic enough, so I asked my assistant Jan Ralske to look for some old blackboards. He found some on the street in Berlin-Mitte, where a school building was being cleared out. We had them sent to France by courier. I then chalked some quotations from my work on to them. When the installation travelled to another art space in Nice the blackboards remained in Lille – and since then I have done without any additional items in my installation works. When *Schnittstelle* (Interface, 1995) was presented in the exhibition *Face à L'Histoire* in Paris I realised that more than 10,000 people visited the Pompidou every day, and if only 10 people per day would see my work during the 100 days of the exhibition it would still mean thousands more than I could reach in cinemateques or film clubs.

In 1996 Catherine David invited me to make a film for documenta X. First we did some research in San Francisco at the studios of stills photographers. One woman was specialised in food photos and we watched her having someone count what was swimming in a can of soup: how many pieces of meat and carrots, how many peas? In the US there are many lawyers who specialise in suing companies who show more pieces of

carrots in their adverts than there actually are in the cans of soup. We agreed on several dates for shoots, which we had to postpone all the time; most of them were cancelled in the end. When our cameraman Ingo Kratisch finally arrived – after his flight had been postponed constantly – we only had two days left to shoot, and we could only use a few minutes from the material. When we gave back our equipment we found out that the camera distributor, the only one left in San Francisco specialising in 16mm, was to close down the next day because there was no longer a market any more for this format. It was also very difficult to set a date for a shoot in Paris. Photographers are used to constant postponements because commissioning agencies or companies are not able to decide what they want. All this meant that my film wasn't ready for the opening of the documenta. The film *Still Life* (1997) actually had its premiere 50 days later. When I gave my apologies to Catherine David, she said: "But we aren't in Cannes here!"

In 1997 I met Doris Heinze – at a station or a film reception – with whom I had been on a jury 10 years before. She said that she was now working for the TV channel NDR, which produced documentary films that could cost up to DM300,000. This was almost three times more than I usually got for a 45- to 60-minute film. We agreed on a documentary about the so-called 'industrial TV', the production of talk- and game-shows, (*Worte und Spiele*/Words and Games 1998). I was somewhat astonished when the first broadcast was scheduled for half past midnight. In the previous years I had often produced my films in collaboration with other European TV channels in Belgium, France, the Netherlands and Austria. Sometimes it was also possible to sell a film to other foreign countries or to resell a film whose licence had expired to a German TV channel. Before this I had been only able to earn money from production, but never from distribution. Basis Film, who had distributed all my films since *Between Two Wars*, scarcely made any profits and paid me – when things went well – a few hundred DM per year.

Along with the crisis that hit the independent cinemas in the 1990s the distribution sales also narrowed; some of my films weren't distributed at all within a year. I made a little more profit abroad: a retrospective brought in several thousand DM. But the costs for foreign-language versions, for handling and shipping, were pretty high. In the mid 90s I put all my prints in storage – which of course meant a further narrowing down of income. Nowadays films like mine are only shown in film museums and archives; other venues abroad – also museums – are only prepared to present videos or even DVDs. It's almost a rule for producers

in Germany that they have to earn from producing, because later they will earn hardly anything from distribution. A production contract with a TV channel includes a licence for broadcasting and therefore entails a future share. But due to the fact that the last payment is made when the film is finished, you get the impression that the film won't have a future. In the 1990s, with some sales and retrospectives, the situation improved for a short time, and for a few years it looked as if there was an increasing demand for documentary films. With the end of the decade this was all over – at least for me.

2000–2003

Because I spent half the year in the US I wanted to make films there too. A curator of a museum in New York asked me to produce something. I proposed an examination of the depiction of prisons in film and video, a study like *Workers Leaving the Factory*. The first meeting took place in SoHo, where I had the most expensive lunch of my life. I never heard from the man who paid for it again.

There is no other democratic country in the world where such a high percentage of the population is in prison. The amount of prisoners even increases if the crime rate sinks – as in recent years. I once travelled to a prison construction site in Oregon with an architect who was employed by an office with several thousand architects. He told me about a certain Bentham and his ideas about the panopticon which were being applied to this building. He had never heard about Foucault or about all the subsequent discourses in which Bentham's idea had been read symptomatically and not as a practical proposal. I travelled from California to Camden, near Philadelphia. The main road was totally ruinous, the only functional building was the prison complex. A director gave me a tour. He showed me the inmates, who could be seen in orange overalls behind glass panels. He pointed to a device on the ceiling. These were the ends of gas pipes; there had been plans to sedate the inmates at the touch of a button in the case of an uprising, but then it turned out that the chemicals would decompose after a few months. He also said that the inmates used to be allowed to have barbecues with their families in the courtyard. But he had stopped this because he wanted to avoid the possibility of the inmates becoming role models for their children – above all for their sons.

They had told me that I would be allowed to film in Camden, but then I wasn't allowed to bring the equipment into the building. A few weeks later I again flew to Oregon, to a prison I was only able to enter under the condition that I wouldn't bring a camera with me. The first thing the guard who gave me a tour asked me was where my camera was, so I fetched it from the car. He

also allowed me to copy a range of archive material. We got in touch with a civil-rights organisation which had organised material from Corcoran in California. In this high-security prison, guards had shot at inmates 2,000 times during one decade. Five inmates had been killed. A wedge-shaped, concrete and treeless prison courtyard; men in sportswear who start a fight, other inmates throw themselves to the ground; a cloud of smoke crosses the image – a guard has opened fire. A single person remains on the ground and is carried away on a stretcher. A human-rights organisation got hold of these images from a surveillance camera thanks to the Freedom of Information Act; I was allowed to copy and quote the material.

At the same time I was researching for a film about shopping malls. I had been reading articles and books about the history of retail architecture. I learned about astonishing experiments, for example about a studio in which they had tried to find out which floor coverings would accelerate the pace of the consumer and which ones would slow it down. I had the idea that I could make a film in which the all-too-familiar subject of the shopping mall would unfold entirely differently. I visited the first mall ever built, by Victor Gruen in Minneapolis, and the then biggest mall in the world in Edmonton. But after several months of research we still hadn't organised a single shoot. Neither the architectural offices nor the real-estate scouts, neither the interior decoration companies nor the eye-tracking specialists – nobody wanted to let us in. Only after a while did I figure out that the mall industry wasn't rejecting us because it wanted to hide its secrets. On the contrary, the rejection was because there weren't any secrets, and this shouldn't become public. And it wasn't so very different in Germany and Austria, where most of the scenes of the film were finally shot. (*Die Schöpfer der Einkaufs-welten* | The Creators of Shopping Worlds, 2001). After the film was broadcast on public-sector television the producer Gudrun Handke-El Ghomri told me that a future project with her would not be possible. My film had a viewing figure of only 5%. Doris Heinze from NDR had already signalled through her behaviour during production meetings that I wouldn't be getting anything more from her in future.

In autumn 1999 Roger M. Buergel called me. He was curating an exhibition at the Generali Foundation Vienna with Ruth Noack. Would I like to contribute a film? I told him about the project with the prison images, which wasn't progressing at that point in time. During a few months I completed a two-channel production. Because there wasn't enough money in the exhibition budget we made an agreement that the work would later be purchased for the Generali collection.

I had to deliver an outline and called it *Ich glaubte Gefangene zu sehen*, because I had just read the English edition of Deleuze's *Unterhandlungen* (Negotiations) where he quotes Ingrid Bergmann from *Europa 51*, saying: "I thought I was seeing convicts." In the German version she said something different and something different again in the original Italian version. For me this was just a working title, but Roger and Ruth had already sent it to the printers, so they asked me to keep it. Later several museums and collections wanted to buy the work, but I had signed a contract saying that it was a unique work. I still don't read contracts that closely, but I always make sure that every work for art spaces has an edition of three, with two or three additional artist copies. This installation has often been rented out to museums and galleries, around 40 times up to now, and each time the curator Sabine Breitwieser has insisted that the installation can only be shown at a single venue at any one time. I had now already made two works with double sound-image channels and I was looking for a subject that invited you to set two images in comparison. I thought about image processing, where it often happens that a video image is translated into a computer image. The war of the allied forces against Iraq in 1991 came into my mind. In those days a new kind of image appeared on television: filmed from the head of a projectile flying towards its aim – when it hit its target, transmission ceased. It was said that these were images from intelligent weapons. 10 years later both images and weapons had hardly been examined. During the following three years I was concerned with these issues and made three installations; *Auge/Maschine I* (Eye/Machine I, 2001); *Auge/Maschine II* (Eye/Machine II, 2002) and *Auge/Maschine III* (Eye/Machine III, 2003). Apart from that I also completed the film *Erkennen und Verfolgen* (War at a Distance, 2003). For the film I received funding from the television producer Inge Classen (3sat), for the installation I was funded by art institutions. This funding alone would not have been enough to carry out complicated research and to film or copy the necessary material. The money for *Eye/Machine I* came from media-art institute ZKM, Karlsruhe, because Tom Levin invited me to participate in his exhibition *Ctrl/Space*. The money for the second part came from Bruges, which was European Capital of Culture at the time, and for part III I got some money from the ICA in London. All of these were chance connections. Before beginning the project I had tried to raise money systematically and asked the curator Anselm Franke to apply for money from around a dozen art institutions; each would contribute a small amount, for which they would then have the opportunity of showing all three works in the end. This didn't work out, because I assume most exhibition

makers want to take the initiative themselves: they are less interested in contributing to something that already exists than to set the stage for something new. As curators they also want to be authors. So I started to collect ideas and to wait for opportunities.

2004

The project about war and image-processing was still in the doldrums. Because of the secrecy rules in the army and the defence industry it took us weeks and months until we were allowed to have a look at anything. When we finally got permission to film or copy images, the material was re-examined afterwards – in some cases it was a series of images of less than a minute. I was therefore eager to make something quickly now, and with a surplus of material. So I planned a direct-cinema film about venture capital. During this project we often had to take the train at 4 am from Berlin to Aachen or Munich the very next day in order to observe the negotiations between venture-capital applicants and possible investors. Since we didn't know the participants and couldn't foresee anything, we sometimes filmed four hours in a row. Even on our way back we often knew that we wouldn't use the material, because the invention at stake was an operating application, for example, for which the negotiations had been held in a technical language. After around 14 of such shoots we came across an ideal situation: for a couple of days two applicants persistently negotiated with two venture capitalists about a loan and its price in an office near Munich. All four were rhetorically skilled and well able to present themselves, and each of them clearly had a different role – in their negotiations it became immediately obvious what the money was for and under which conditions it would be invested. Only when the film was finished did I realise that I had never seen extended financial negotiations in a documentary film before. The producer of this film was Werner Dütsch from WDR, Cologne. I had made *Inextinguishable Fire*, my first film after leaving the film academy, for this TV channel, and I had worked with Werner Dütsch since 1979. The producers in the film department at WDR had initiated a programme like those in cinematheques. The films of Griffith or Eisenstein, the American film noir, Sternberg or Western-series were broadcast here long before you could see them in West Germany's major cinemas. They were also given critical introductions. Films by Jean Rouch could be seen, sometimes for the first time. The department also produced documentary films, by Hartmut Bitomsky, Claude Lanzmann or Marcel Ophüls. In the 1990s the budget for these activities was gradually reduced. I think this short boom in the documentary film occurred because the producers realised that they could make a documentary for

a tenth of the amount took for a feature film. It needed a few years before they noticed that it was even cheaper not to produce documentary films either. Commercial television asserted itself in Germany and throughout Europe during the 1990s. The public-sector channels adjusted themselves to their competitors. *Nicht ohne Risiko* (Nothing Ventured, 2004) was the last film I made with Werner Dütsch as producer, who was now going into retirement; the other producers left shortly before or afterwards. There was only one successor for all of them. Nowadays the WDR has no producers for literature, theatre or ballet. Now there are only animal documentaries and films with the actor Heinz Rühmann against which the WDR had always fought, no matter whether they were from before or after 1945. But there must have been at least one reasonable person left there, otherwise the huge administration buildings of the channel would have collapsed long ago.

2005–2007

If you apply for film funding you have to submit a lot of paperwork, even if it's about a documentary film for which you can't know where you will shoot and with whom. This is not expected from an artist. To receive money from museums or other art institutions you only need to submit a few pages of text. I received funding from the Kulturstiftung des Bundes (German Federal Cultural Foundation) on the basis of a single page, and the juror thanked me explicitly for the brevity with which I had explained that I would like to make a film and an installation about bricks: how they were produced and laid. We spent a week in Gando, a village in Burkina Faso. It is situated in the African savannah, where the roots of the trees reach the ground water, so the trees are green, but the earth – when it is not raining – is utterly stark. We were there in the dry season – only then do the inhabitants have time for a collective work. We watched how hundreds of people erected a little clay building that would serve as a clinic. And we observed them working on a school annex, a brick building with three classrooms and an arched roof. I have never watched people whose life was so different from mine in such proximity and for such a long time. An anthropologist would need weeks or months to get into a position like this. Our informant was Francis Kéré, who comes from the village of Gando and took his matura in Berlin, where he also studied architecture. He organises the finances in Europe, including donations, and designs the buildings. The school building with three classrooms costs 30,000 Euro. It has a roof that keeps away the heat and under which air circulates. Only local materials are used for the construction; not even electricity is needed. Apart from this the buildings designed by Kéré and put up by the village community are very beautiful.

For this project we also filmed twice in India, and in France, Austria, Switzerland and Germany. The Viennese art space MUMOK offered me a solo show, for which I made a double-channel installation from this material. (*Vergleich über ein Drittes/Comparison via a Third*, 2007). The people shown producing and building bricks are heard in various languages that are not translated. There is neither a commentary nor intertitles. The work was projected by two synchronised 16-mm projectors. 16-mm projectors are not produced anymore, but there is a small company in Canada that specialises in synchronised multiple projection.

Sabine Breitwieser invited Antje Ehmann and myself to curate an exhibition at the Generali Foundation in Vienna. We planned to show works that in a narrower or broader sense examine film. Works in different media – photography, painting, sculpture – that give an insight into what film is or can be. We wanted in every way to avoid showing films that were made for the cinema or cinema-like situations, and to focus the awareness on the difference between cinema and non-cinema. During the preceding years Antje had worked for an exhibition about the phenomenon of shrinking cities. She watched hundreds, maybe thousands of films which dealt with urban decay or were set against the backdrop of rundown cities. She made a double projection where on the left image you could see people – individuals, couples, groups, sometimes also humanoids or animals, taken from all sorts of different films with different production values – moving from right to left; on the right image you could see individuals, couples, groups and the same humanoid moving from left to right. (*Wege/Paths*, 2006). I was stunned by how strong an analytical effect could be achieved from a montage according to motif and direction of movement. I realised that I had always wanted to make simple montages like this and that I had refrained from doing so because of producing for television. I had also not yet made full use of the newly gained freedom in my work for art spaces. For her installations Antje again watched hundreds or thousands of films in search of motifs like the woman-on-the-telephone or the man-looking-into-the-mirror. Whatever project I was working on – writing, editing or organising – I could always hear the sound of all these film scenes from the next room, where Antje was digitising them, trying to include them in her montages, or most of the time dismissing them. It was planned that the exhibition *Cinema like never before* (Vienna 2006, Berlin 2007) should include works by Antje, by myself and some that we wanted to do together. We did a lot of additional research to find suitable works by other authors or artists, some of whom we also commissioned. At the same time I was also busy with other

projects, doing research, making plans and organising shoots. Suddenly our place turned into a proper production company.

During the preparations for the exhibition Roger M. Buerghel and Ruth Noack invited me to produce something for documenta 12. It was supposed to be something about the World Cup. For years Roger had wanted me to make something about football; he mentioned Bayern Munich and money from BMW. For the documenta I had the idea of presenting the Cup Final on 20 screens, half of them showing the game from different camera positions: a single player, different players; the goalkeepers would each be tracked by a camera over the entire game. The other half of the screens would display various analytical methods, the paths of a single player or all the players, for example. I decided to use already existing analytical systems and to commission new ones. Roger told me at our first meeting in autumn 2005 that the National Museum in Oslo and MACBA in Barcelona would support the project. A few weeks later I wrote to Roger that we had calculated the costs for the project and that some 500,000 Euro would be needed. He wrote back that he would pass on the figures. Then I heard nothing from him for a long time. In February 2006 we were finally in a position to speak to two representatives of FIFA, the international football association, in Switzerland. Their bosses had decided to allow us to use the material from the cup final for our installation. This generosity was lessened a bit by the license fee of 20,000 Euro that we would have to pay; for FIFA this is a mere tip. The FIFA people only got back to us a short time before the Cup Final – and we only got six instead of the promised 26 image tracks. I still had no budget after the Cup Final was over. Then we succeeded in getting 260,000 Euro from a cultural foundation. That was half of what we had calculated, so we cut down the number of image tracks from 20 to 12 and we also dispensed with commissioning animations. For over a year I hadn't known if we would get the original material or the money. You could say that Roger Buerghel's way of doing things was a bit nonchalant. Even though he managed to realise a great many projects for the documenta, also ones that were not earmarked in the budget.

Since *The Creators of Shopping Worlds*, Matthias Rajmann had been my assistant, contributing to every production, first as a researcher only, then also dealing with production issues and acting as soundman. He always takes a lot of initiative and makes suggestions following from his research, and I often make use of them. For this documenta production he had more to do than ever before. For example, it took more than three months until a Russian software company in Nizhny

Novgorod had adapted its software in the way we needed for particular image tracks. In this period Matthias corresponded with Russia several hours a day. He looked all over the world for companies and research institutes specialising in football. He persuaded the ones we selected to collaborate with us, and he also coordinated their contributions to our project. He coordinated the production in Berlin and Munich, our editing room, the company for the installation technique and the graphic designers. This project was very conceptual and certainly modern, but it annoyed me that I basically had to supervise and make decisions and could hardly contribute anything practically. I therefore edited a track on my laptop, even when I was travelling, in trains, in hotels, on a cold Easter day in Jerusalem or in Jeonju, a small town in South Korea with a festival, Jeonju International Film Festival (JIFF), where many independent films were presented. I had to go there in April because the festival had given me some money for a film (*Aufschub* Respite, 2007). The three films commissioned by JIFF – apart from mine, one was by Pedro Costa, another by Eugène Green – had been presented at the Locarno International Film Festival in August 2007. We won a Silver Leopard. I was surprised by that, and also by Michel Piccoli, who was in my row and from whom I managed to get an autograph, and when I ran onto the stage of the open-air cinema in the Piazza Grande, I praised the Jeonju Festival for making independent productions possible.

2007–2009

Whenever I taught film I insisted on watching the material in great detail; first at the editing table, then with the help of video, today with DVD. Sometimes we watched a film – sequence for sequence – for four days, scrolling backwards and forwards again and again. This method is not at all common in film schools or film-theoretical seminars. In fields of study where everything is about words, it is also not the usual practice to read and discuss a text line by line, as I learnt in 2005 when Antje and me met with some friends once a week in order to read and discuss texts together. Everybody in our group – with the exception of myself – had studied either literature and/or philosophy and everybody had only experienced this kind of reading in self-organised groups outside university. Amongst other texts we were also reading Giorgio Agamben's *Was von Auschwitz bleibt*. (Remnants of Auschwitz: The Witness and the Archive). Additionally we also re-read other texts about the camps and watched films about them, which I also showed and discussed in my class in Vienna, at the Academy of Fine Arts. A particular scene in Erwin Leiser's *Den Blodiga tiden* (Mein Kampf, 1959) and Alain Resnais' *Nuit et brouillard* (Night and Fog, 1955) caught my attention:

men, women and children are getting on a train that will take them to Bergen-Belsen, Theresienstadt or Auschwitz. This material was shot in Westerbork in 1944. Westerbork, situated in the north of the Netherlands, was at first a camp for Jewish refugees from Germany. After the Netherlands' occupation by the Nazi Germans it came under the control of the security forces and was renamed Polizeiliches Judendurchgangslager Westerbork (Westerbork Police Transit Camp for Jews). Around 100,000 people, most of them Jews – according to the Nazi's concept of race – and also a few hundred Roma and Sinti were brought here and then transported to other camps. Only a few thousand survived. Westerbork was a special camp, in which many inmates wore civilian clothes and where the SS was hardly visible. There were no beatings or murders; food was scarce, but nobody starved to death. And there was a hospital, a laundry, a kindergarten; there were religious services and cultural events, concerts and cabarets. The camp administration was carried out by inmates: inmates registered the newcomers, served in different camp police groups and drew up the weekly deportation lists – although the leader of the camp, SS man Albert Konrad Gemmeker, had the last word. Gemmeker commissioned the photographer Rudolf Breslauer, a Jewish refugee from Germany, to shoot sequences with two cameras for a film about the camp. Some pages of the script have survived:

Close-up: the commander in uniform, at his desk reading the certificate. Behind him on the wall, the Führer's image. The commander stands up, presses a bell button.

Cross-fades: the junior squad leader enters the room, approaches the commander, helps him into his coat, gives him his leather belt, cap and gloves.

Cross-fades: the command building, from the front. The commander leaves the building, approaches the camera on the middle path.

These scenes were never realised or did not survive. Gemmeker told the court after the war that he had intended to make a film about the camp for its visitors – a kind of record of achievement for his superiors.

First I ordered a DVD with documentary footage shot by Breslauer from the Westerbork memorial. When we first watched this material in my seminar, we all had a hard time reading these images. One student pointed out a man in the camp's railway station who was helping a policeman to close the sliding door of the wagon in which he himself was being deported. Almost everybody getting on the train was carrying luggage,

and we realised that you have to consider that all their belongings will be taken away by the Nazis as soon as they arrive in Auschwitz. Taking this into account, the bundles, parcels and blankets being dragged along – which usually indicate a compulsory change of location – turn into tragic signs.

I read more about Westerbork during the following months, an extensive diary for example, written in the camp by the inmate Philip Mechanicus. He doesn't mention the film shootings, but he reports that in 1944 many of the inmates were afraid that the camp would soon be closed down. He also thinks that the SS wanted to maintain the camp in order not to be sent to the Eastern Front. So it is also possible that Gemmeker wanted the camp to be filmed to prove its usefulness for the war economy. In the images of the deportation from Westerbork to Auschwitz – and here we see the film's only close-up – we can see a girl wearing a headscarf and looking timidly or anxiously into the camera. This image has been reproduced frequently. In 1992 the Dutch journalist Aad Wageear successfully identified her after a year's research: 10-year old Settela Steinbach, a Sinti. In one of the film's sequences he discovered an inscription of a name and date of birth on the suitcase of a woman who was being brought to the train in an invalid-chair. From the deportation lists he was able to work out the date of the shoot. He also discovered the number 74 written in chalk on a wagon, and that this number had been crossed out and corrected to 75 when the train left – so a further person must have been assigned to this wagon.

I repeatedly discussed what I was reading in the seminar in Vienna. We looked again and again at some details of the images and tried to understand the motivation behind certain scenes with the help of our background knowledge.

I decided to make a film in the spirit of such studies, a film that would also depict the process of examining the images. The raw material was silent, so I kept it like this and only added some intertitles. I wanted the images themselves to speak. (*Respite*, 2007). Television doesn't show any silent films. Music, sound or a voiceover are always added because of the anxiety that the viewers might immediately think that there was something wrong with the transmission or their television set. So I didn't even try to find television money for this project. But the TV channel 3sat did actually show the film without sound in 2009, although at a very late hour – this might have evaded the attention of the programmers higher up. Inge Classen, who programmed it, told me that she had only once shown a

film without sound, *Un chant d'amour* (A Song of Love, 1950) by Jean Genet.

In 2007 I finished quite a few projects I had been working on for years, including *Übertragung/Transmission*. When we were in Washington in 2003 to do some archive research for *Eye/Machine* and *War at a Distance*, we saw that almost everybody who visited the Vietnam War Memorial touched either the stone or the names of the more than 50,000 dead engraved there. It was Antje's idea to make a film or installation about the behaviour of these and other visitors to memorials all over the world. The opportunity to realise this project came about a little later, when Christoph Schenker of the Zurich Academy of the Arts invited us to make a work to be presented in a public space. During the following years we were always on the look-out for places where people would touch a stone or a sculpture. The visitors to St. Peter's Cathedral in Rome probably touch the foot of the Petrus sculpture in order to gain some of its holiness. But in the Jesuit Church in Munich they pat the cheek of the bust of Father Rupert – who was an anti-Nazi – because they want to pay respect or to console him for his sufferings; so here they want to give and not to gain. We filmed many types of magical touchings, efforts to transmit something invisible.

The work was installed in a tram station in Zurich. A flat screen was fitted next to a WC. When I came to this place shortly before the official opening, I saw that there was a bench in front of the screen with two homeless people sitting on it. They already seemed to know the film very well and predicted what was coming next. But many people waiting for the tram didn't give it a second glance. When the bar tables with snacks and aperitifs had been set up, I spoke to a technician about how to enhance the quality of the sound. Then there was a honk behind me: a cleaning vehicle was approaching the station. Two men began cleaning the concrete floor with a high-pressure device. A bystander took photos of this, whereupon a cleaning man threatened to punch him. This must have intimidated me, because when one of the men also began to clean the wall where my screen was embedded, I was struck by the thought that the tram station had already been spotlessly clean even before they started to clean it. The next moment the screen faded out. When the technician took a look at it, water poured out of our installation. So there was no ceremonial opening. We went to a dinner where I was introduced to Mr and Mrs Schwyzer-Winiker, whose foundation contributed a lot of money to the project *Kunst Öffentlichkeit Zürich*. Usually you have to explain a film in order to get money for it; here politeness required me to explain my film after I had spent the money on it. The equipment had been paid for by

the city of Zurich, and municipal workers had destroyed it. It took a few weeks until they found a way to repair the damage.

In January 2009 we had a two-day shoot in the military base of Fort Lewis, near Seattle, Washington. Fort Lewis is 40 square kilometres in size and has up to 40,000 inhabitants. We were in only one building with some seminar rooms next to a canteen. We were filming a workshop in which civilian therapists explained to army therapists how to work with Virtual Iraq, which is used in the treatment of soldiers and ex-soldiers who had been traumatised in the war. Immersion Therapy lets the traumatised patient repeat his or her crucial experience, retell it and re-experience it. Virtual Iraq, or VI, is a computer-animation programme which is supposed to make the immersion, the diving into the source of the trauma, easier or more powerful.

The civilian therapists who work for the companies and institutions that develop and distribute the VI system, and who are also in charge of the supervision, were dressed like lawyers or business people – most of them were women. The military therapists – the majority were men – wore camouflage uniforms. They kept their jackets on, which was advisable since the heating system hardly worked. The rooms were carelessly furnished, the ceiling lighting – as we learnt – hadn't functioned for years. There are hardly any private companies that would hold their seminars in run-down rooms like these. Such austerity – I also saw this in the Bundeswehr – stands in bizarre contrast to the usual waste of the military. We were allotted three go-betweens, one person for each member of our crew. A PR woman was flown in from the Pentagon in order to monitor/advise us.

The civilian therapists first gave rather half-hearted talks with image examples. Afterwards role-playing. The therapist sits at a computer, wearing a headset. The patient sits or stands next to him, wearing data-specs. These show the Virtual Iraq imagery. There are two locations: one is a desert road, which is driven through by a Humvee. The other is a city with a market place, a mosque, large squares, narrow alleyways and houses you can walk through. The patient chooses his path, the therapist selects incidents. The therapist can lead the patient into virtual ambushes or make him witness terrible assassinations. He can choose between accompanying sounds of helicopters, muezzins and explosions of all kinds.

During the role-plays everybody was cooperative. You might think that a patient would say that these two scenarios with only a few choices would have nothing to do with the cause of his trauma. But it became apparent that the role-plays which were attended by military therapists alone, lacked a certain

degree of fantasy and tension – so we could only use very short sequences from them. Most of the military therapists chewed gum as if they were just ordinary soldiers.

Then something really extraordinary happened. One of the civilian therapists who was playing a patient described a patrol walk through Baghdad. It was his first mission and he had been assigned to a certain Jones. They had been ordered to clean the streets, which basically meant pulling down propaganda posters. Jones suggested separating and that each of them should see to one side of the street. This was against orders, but they did it. When he went into a courtyard, he heard an explosion. He ran over – at this point the patient faltered and began to ramble. The therapist playing the therapist interrupted him: what had he seen?

Soldier: "When I went around the corner, I heard this explosion. I thought to myself: Shit! No! I immediately turned around to look for Jones, but I couldn't see him anywhere. Damn! I immediately ran to the other side ... I can't see him any more ... I ran over to see what had happened. There was smoke everywhere ..."

Therapist: "You're doing great! What did you see there?"

Soldier: "When I arrived, I saw ... that there was nothing left above his knee."

At this point he broke down. In the following session he repeatedly asked to stop, insisting that he couldn't bear it any more. The therapist insisted on continuing. He hesitated, stuttered and got caught up several times in self reproach and attempts to explain what he was thinking back then. His acting was so convincing that friends of mine, to whom I had explained our film (*Immersion*, 2009) nevertheless believed that they were watching someone recounting a real experience. The press officer who had given us permission to shoot also thought that it was real.

The images that were made to provoke a recollection of the trauma are very similar to the ones with which US soldiers are now being trained and prepared for the battlefields. I would like to deal with this in my next work.

Written for the publication: Antje Ehmann, Kodwo Eshun (eds.): *Harun Farocki. Against What? Against Whom?* Berlin / London 2009. Translated from the German by Antje Ehmann and Michael Turbull.

JUNE 3 ON THE CONSTRUCTION OF GRIFFITH'S FILMS
2006, 9 MIN.

PARALLEL I-IV
2012-2014, 43 MIN.

JUNE 10 REMEMBER TOMORROW IS THE FIRST DAY
OF THE REST OF YOUR LIFE
1972, 10 MIN.

THE TASTE OF LIFE
1979, 29 MIN.

MAKE UP
1973, 29 MIN.

Screenings from June 17 – July 15 are on Sundays, 2 pm
at King Juan Carlos 1 of Spain Theater, 53 Washington Square South, New York, NY.

JUNE 17 THE EXPRESSION OF HANDS
1997, 30 MIN.

WORKERS LEAVING THE FACTORY
1995, 36 MIN.

JUNE 24 PRISON IMAGES
2000, 60 MIN.

JULY 1 WAR AT A DISTANCE
2003, 58 MIN.

JULY 8 SERIOUS GAMES
2009-10, 44 MIN.

JULY 15 NOTHING VENTURED
2004, 50 MIN.

Early Harun Farocki as part of the film series "1968 on Screen"
at Anthology Film Archives:

MAY 24 & MAY 31 THE CAMPAIGN VOLUNTEER
9:15PM 7PM 1967, 14 MIN.

THE WORDS OF THE CHAIRMAN
1967, 3 MIN.

THEIR NEWSPAPERS
1968, 17 MIN.

INEXTINGUISHABLE FIRE
1969, 25 MIN.